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most powerful of allies" in socialism (p. 273). Character will make socialism possible and socialism will make character—such seems to be the conclusion at which the author has arrived.

Whatever may be said in criticism the book is meritorious and will be read with keen interest. The literary style is excellent and enriched by apt quotations from some of the best writers in the English and in continental languages. We doubt if the beliefs here expounded will receive general acceptance among orthodox clericals or the general rank and file of socialists, but for the general reader this will detract little from their interest.

The History of the British Post-Office. By J. C. HEMMEON. Cambridge: Harvard University, 1912. 8vo, pp. vi+256. \$2.00 net.

The British Post-office, like all other British institutions of long standing, has had a most intricate and involved history. It has successfully met the needs of the people and of the government under conditions which to us would seem quite impossible. As a system it has been neither logical nor uniform.

To the most difficult task of presenting historically the facts connected with its peculiar and many-sided development, this book is devoted. Commencing at about the end of the fifteenth century the author has traced chronologically in his first four chapters the growth and evolution of the Post-office in all its different branches, through its successive transformations down to the present time. In these chapters a tremendous conglomerate of facts illustrative of the most salient features of the development is presented to the reader. Every happening or event of any importance and indeed many which can hardly be said to be of any interest are here recorded.

In the remaining chapters some of the more important aspects of the problem have been singled out to receive consideration in "longitudinal section." Of these might be mentioned the chapter on "Foreign Connections," which considers the ocean carriage of mails, the system of subsidies to authorized lines and understandings with other nations; that on the "Telegraph System," which since 1868 has been a branch of the Post-office—special regard being here paid to its finances; and on the relation between the Post-office and Telephone companies which have been licensed by it.

The book is excellent. It is quite evidently the result of considerable and careful research. It must be criticized however in that being so entirely a narration of facts, those events which really are of great significance have not been sufficiently emphasized. A little weighting of facts would have been an improvement. One would like to have seen, too, some little interpretation.

The Socialist Argument. By CHARLES C. HITCHCOCK. Chicago: Charles H. Kerr & Co., 1912. 8vo, pp. 174.

This is the work of an amateur in socialism. Unfortunately such dilettantism in socialist literature is of frequent occurrence. After a careful perusal

of the book the reader might be able to surmise what in the opinion of the author is the socialist point of view, but it will be difficult to find the *argument* upon which that point of view rests.

For instance, the author asserts that each one has a right to share in the possession of land and the means of subsistence because "no one disputes . . . that the individual has a right to life" (p. 33). Farther on, the propositions that "labor produces all wealth" and that "the laborer is entitled to his product" are regarded as "two fundamental truths" (p. 55).

Evidently the question how the share of each laborer in the product is to be determined is too simple to require attention. Then again, for all social evils and sufferings, capitalism is made responsible (p. 97) and "our present economic system in its ethical bearings stands condemned without argument" (p. 99). Specifically, intemperance, the author asserts, will be eliminated because under socialism "the pecuniary incentive [profit] on the part of manufacturers and dealers" of intoxicating beverages will disappear (p. 106)!

De hoc satis. The book can appeal neither to the serious student of socialism nor to the ordinary layman who is interested in the socialist movement. It is neither a scientific nor a popular presentation of *the socialist argument*.

Panama. By ALBERT EDWARDS. New York: Macmillan, 1911.
8vo, pp. x+585. \$2.50 net.

This volume on Panama gives an admirably written account of the author's own experience during his visits to the Canal Zone and neighboring territory; and furthermore a careful and fairly detailed history of the isthmus from the time of its discovery, through the period of Spanish occupations, the revolutions, the French attempt at canal building, and the work of the American Commission. Some study is made of the industrial possibilities of the isthmus. It is the author's opinion that various enterprises such as lumbering, fruit raising, and gold mining might be profitably undertaken if the government of Panama could be induced to spend money on the development of transportation facilities and if some more certain labor force could be discovered.

Several chapters are devoted to the canal, its history, the men who have done the work, their problems, and the various activities of the canal commission. The writer's enthusiasm for these men and the way in which they have done their work certainly is justified by the results he shows, as in the work of the sanitary commission or the commissary department. But his right to call this work an experiment in socialism, when he himself admits the government to be bureaucratic, is not clear. That, however, does not detract from the results nor from the value of the facts which are presented. Certainly the author's style in presenting his material makes it most interesting reading.